

HAMNET BULLETIN FOR SUNDAY

7 SEPTEMBER 2003

HAMNET is the Official Emergency Communications network of the South African Radio League and provides emergency communication to local, regional and national authorities, when requested to do so.

THIS BULLETIN WAS COMPILED AND PREPARED BY FRANCOIS BOTHA - ZS6BUU.

IN THE BULLETIN TODAY:-

BULLETINS AROUND THE COUNTRY HAMNET GAUTENG INDABA & WEATHER WATCH LOCAL & INTERNATIONAL DISASTERS UN BOMB BLAST INJURES RADIO AMATEURS

DATES TO REMEMBER

1. HAMNET BULLETINS AROUND THE COUNTRY

KZN - Sunday morning at 07H00 on their local VHF repeaters with a relay on 7.070MHz

National Bulletin at 17H00 local on 10,130Mhz in the 30M band with a relay on 7.070Mhz, but currently being read at 16H30 due to propagation problems in winter.

The Gauteng North bulletin will follow immediately after the National Bulletin on 145,725MHz in the Pretoria area on Sundays.

North West Province have a club bulletin on Mondays, which includes a Hamnet segment at 19H00 local on 3,750Mhz in the 80M band as well as their local repeater on 145.737.5Mhz.

Hamnet Western Cape Province with a bulletin on Wednesdays at 20H30 local on 145:700MHz, relayed on 3,674MHz.

The HAMNET Bulletin is sent to all those of whom I have an e-mail address and also sent out on packet by Rudi, ZS6DX.

2. HAMNET GAUTENG INDABA & WEATHER WATCH

The HAMNET Wednesday evening Indaba is to be resurrected.

Martin Harper, ZS6MSG has proposed that we have an informal get-together on Wednesday evenings from about 7pm local time on the 145.700 Sandton/Hamnet repeater.

This forum for exchanging of ideas for HAMNET members and interested listeners, has been operating very successfully in KwaZulu Natal and was up to a few years ago, operational under the helm of Chris, ZS6VB.

It is envisaged that initially, we use 2Metres only but if interest should grow, we could expand to HF at a later stage. However, we have already had a response

regarding going out on 2M only. Chris, ZS6BYQ would like an HF transmission as well.

The other item we as Hamnet members would like to re-introduce is the daily weather check that ran for many years but eventually fell away. Please consider a 6pm local time, informal check on 7,070MHz, just to exchange weather conditions in various parts of the country - especially now with summer around the corner.

3. LOCAL & INTERNATIONAL DISASTERS

The list of countries that experienced disasters of some sort, is as long as an A4 page, and unfortunately, the majority of these took place in Africa, with some exceptions.

Africa bears the brunt of political unrest, famine, drought and fires.

The Democratic republic of Congo still heads the list of countries experiencing problems of either a political nature or famine. Malawi follows with an estimated 700,000 people in urgent need of food relief.

Uganda is next on the list needing teachers to assist with an influx of pupils and Liberia is faced with ongoing strife due to rebels trying to take control of the country.

Parts of Mexico were lashed by hurricane Ignacio that left thousands of people homeless.

Pakistan has had floods and the latest flood problem is in China where at least 10,000 homes have been destroyed and thousands of people left homeless due to floods and landslides. Torrential rains that began on August the 28th have affected thirty-two counties in the Province of Shaanxi.

Many of the flooded rivers are tributaries of the Yellow River, China's second longest river. The country's Police chief was killed while rushing to the frontlines when the vehicle in which he was a passenger, careered off a damaged bridge into a swollen river.

At least a 120,000 people have been evacuated from low-lying areas to prevent further drowning and possible loss of life.

Bridges and roads have been washed away and telecommunications have been severely disrupted in many areas. There has also been a break in radio and TV transmissions.

The country is bracing itself, as the torrential rains show no signs of abating.

The state of Montana in the USA had a severe fire that scorched an estimated 400,000 acres or more of forest. Many ARES/RACES operators were activated to assist with communication.

In South Africa on the other hand, it's been the severe cold snap that hit us during the latter half of August.

Downloading information from the Weather Bureau's website, I felt it necessary to send out an advisory in anticipation of heavy snowfalls and severe cold last month.

As it turned out, heavy snow did fall in the Western Cape but tended to turn into severe cold conditions as the cold front moved in an easterly direction.

New record low temperatures for some towns were recorded. The night of 21 August saw some new records being established. Bloemfontein recorded a low of -10.3, previous -9.7. Kimberley -8.5, previous -6.7. Bethlehem -10.2, previous -9.2, Frankfort -10.4, previous -10.0. Ottosdal -8.4, previous -6.0. Standerton -9.5, previous -7.9, and Johannesburg a -7.0 and previous to that was -5.0.

The Weather bureau has warned that cold snaps could still be with us for a while; so don't become too complacent now that warmer weather has set in.

The berg wind conditions unfortunately also caused a lot of veld and plantation fires that caused damage running into hundreds of millions of Rand.

4. UN BOMB BLAST INJURES RADIO AMATEURS

Two Amateur Radio operators doing duty at the United Nations Building in Baghdad were injured when a truck laden with explosives, was detonated outside the building.

The three operators were using their communications skills for humanitarian relief work for the United Nations, the Red Cross and other non-governmental organizations in Iraq.

They are Ghis Penny, ON5NT, Michael Dirksen, PA5M and Robert Kasca, S53R. All 3 were in the building when the bomb went off on the 19th of August. Ghis and Michael were injured and airlifted out of Iraq but Robert was uninjured, but suffered from shock. Amateur radio emergency communications also has its dangerous moments.

5. DATES TO REMEMBER

Cometh the month of September, one automatically thinks of September 11 and the city of New York.

In an article downloaded from QRZ.com, on Thursday Sept. 11th 2003, in remembrance of September 11th 2001, the Emergency Net Alpha will be activated briefly on a frequency in the their 60 metre band. Depending on the availability of a frequency, various emergency groups who participated on that day will be called in. Once that formality is over, anybody else who would like to join the net will be welcome.

As it turns out, this is not just a remembrance call-up but also a reminder to all to be available and on standby as it has already been established that Bin Laden is again planning an attack, but this time a chemical or biological attack. Many people, however, would rather forget what happened on 9/11.

FINAL NOTE

I have also downloaded News Bulletin No. 1 dated July 2003. This bulletin was issued by the Emergency Communications Co-ordinator representing IARU-region-1. His name is Gordon Adams G3LEQ who was appointed at the San Marino conference late last year to the new region-1.

I will deal with this news item in a later communiqué as Gordon has given us various routes by which we can communicate with him and assist him in his task.

Also downloaded from the Department of Transport, was a letter indicating their awareness of HAMNET as a means of alternative emergency communications in times of disasters. More on that in later bulletins.

Bulletin ends.